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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/685,265

10/14/2003

Haruhisa Masuda

1376-03

4015

35811

7590

06/07/2006

IP GROUP OF DLA PIPER RUDNICK GRAY CARY US LLP  
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EXAMINER

DUNWOODY, AARON M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3679

DATE MAILED: 06/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/685,265	<b>Applicant(s)</b> MASUDA ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> Aaron M. Dunwoody	<b>Art Unit</b> 3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 March 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22, 26 and 27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22, 26 and 27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-11, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The term "excellent fuel permeation resistance" in claims 1, 2 and 22 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The term "excellent fuel permeation resistance" is not defined by the claim, the specification does not provide a standard for ascertaining the requisite degree, and one of ordinary skill in the art would not be reasonably apprised of the scope of the invention. For examination purposes, the Examiner will assume that excellent fuel permeation resistance is resistance fuel permeation when compared to an extremely porous material.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-11, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US patent 6540264, Yokoyama et al in view of US patent 6258927, Oka et al.

In regards to claim 1, Yokoyama et al disclose a fuel pipe joint having excellent fuel permeation resistance, using a joint material. Yokoyama et al does not disclose the joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methy1-1,8-octanediamine. Oka et al teach a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methy1-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas (col. 1, lines 7-11). As Oka et al relates to polyamide

Art Unit: 3679

compositions used in connectors, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the joint with a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methyl-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas, as taught by Oka et al.

In regards to claim 2, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al disclose a fuel pipe joint having excellent fuel permeation resistance, using a joint material comprising a polyamide resin composition comprising from 50 to 99 parts by weight of a polyamide (nylon 9T) and from 1 to 50 parts by weight of another polyamide resin or another thermoplastic resin, the polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methyl-1,8-octanediamine.

In regards to claim 3, Oka et al discloses the joint material further comprising reinforcement.

Art Unit: 3679

In regards to claim 4, Oka et al discloses the joint material further comprising an electrically conducting filler.

In regards to claim 5, Oka et al discloses the electrically conducting filler having an aspect ratio of 50 or more and a short diameter of 0.5 nm to 10 gm.

In regards to claim 6, Oka et al discloses the joint material further comprising a reinforcement and an electrically conducting filler at a ratio of 1:3 to 3:1 by weight.

In regards to claim 7-11, Yokoyama et al discloses a fuel pipe quick connector comprising a cylindrical body.

In regards to claims 26 and 27, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al inherently disclose the joint material having a fuel permeation resist measured in fuel permeability of 1.8 – 2.4 mg/day

Claims 12-13 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al as applied to claims 1-11 above, and further in view of WO 93/925835, Noone et al.

In regards to claim 12, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al disclose the claimed invention including a joint body having first and second end portions, from the first to second end portions of the joint body a continuous hollow portion being formed, the first end portion of the joint body being able to sealingly engage with a first tube, the second end portion of the joint body being able to liquid-tightly engage with a male-type second tube, wherein the joint body is made of the joint material. Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al do not disclose a resin first tube. Noone et al teach a resin first tube which has

Art Unit: 3679

been employed in the past (pg. 1, lines 10-12). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a resin first tube which has been employed in the past, as taught by Noone et al.

In regards to claim 13, Yokoyama et al disclose the first end portion of the joint body being formed as a nipple (14).

In regards to claim 16, Yokoyama et al disclose an O-ring around the hollow portion at the second end portion of the joint body in order to liquid-tightly engage with the male-type second tube.

In regards to claim 17, Noone et al disclose the second tube being a resin tube.

In regards to claim 18, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al disclose the second tube having a flange portion and the fuel pipe quick connector further comprising a retainer (19) inside the fuel joint body at the second end portion thereof for engaging with and retaining the flange portion of the second tube.

In regards to claim 19, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al disclose the retainer being made of the joint material.

In regards to claim 20, Yokoyama et al disclose a fuel pipe component obtained by joining the quick connector with a polyamide resin tube by a welding method selected from spin welding, vibration welding, laser welding and ultrasonic welding.

Note, the method of forming the device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, the limitation, joining the quick connector with a polyamide resin tube by a welding method selected from spin welding, vibration welding, laser welding and ultrasonic welding, has been given little patentable weight.

Art Unit: 3679

In regards to claim 21, Noone et al disclose the polyamide resin tube being a multilayer tube comprising a barrier layer.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al and further in view of Noone et al, and further in view of Patent Application Publication US2003/0137148 A1, Andre et al.

In regards to claim 14, Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al and further in view of Noone et al disclose the claimed invention except an O-ring around the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body. Andre et al teach an O-ring (52) around the nipple (36) of the first end portion of the joint body (26) to seal the nipple with a flexible tube. As Andre et al relates to fluid connector, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an O-ring around the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body to seal the nipple with a flexible tube.

In regards to claim 15, Andre et al disclose the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body having a plurality of protruded barbs on an outer peripheral surface thereof.



Claims 1-11, 26 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US patent 6540264, Yokoyama et al in view of Patent Application Publication US2003/023008 A1, Uchida et al.

In regards to claim 1, Yokoyama et al disclose a fuel pipe joint having excellent fuel permeation resistance, using a joint material. Yokoyama et al does not disclose the joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methy1-1,8-octanediamine. Uchida et al teach a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methy1-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas (col. 1, lines 7-11). As Uchida et al relates to polyamide compositions used in connectors, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the joint with a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine

Art Unit: 3679

component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methyl-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas, as taught by Uchida et al.

In regards to claim 2, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al disclose a fuel pipe joint having excellent fuel permeation resistance, using a joint material comprising a polyamide resin composition comprising from 50 to 99 parts by weight of a polyamide (nylon 9T) and from 1 to 50 parts by weight of another polyamide resin or another thermoplastic resin, the polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methyl-1,8-octanediamine.

In regards to claim 3, Uchida et al discloses the joint material further comprising reinforcement.

In regards to claim 4, Uchida et al discloses the joint material further comprising an electrically conducting filler.

In regards to claim 5, Uchida et al discloses the electrically conducting filler having an aspect ratio of 50 or more and a short diameter of 0.5 nm to 10  $\mu$ m.

In regards to claim 6, Uchida et al discloses the joint material further comprising a reinforcement and an electrically conducting filler at a ratio of 1:3 to 3:1 by weight.

In regards to claim 7-11, Yokoyama et al discloses a fuel pipe quick connector comprising a cylindrical body.

In regards to claims 26 and 27, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al inherently disclose the joint material having a fuel permeation resist measured in fuel permeability of 1.8 – 2.4 mg/day

Claims 12-13 and 16-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al as applied to claims 1-11 above, and further in view of WO 93/925835, Noone et al.

In regards to claim 12, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al disclose the claimed invention including a joint body having first and second end portions, from the first to second end portions of the joint body a continuous hollow portion being formed, the first end portion of the joint body being able to sealingly engage with a first tube, the second end portion of the joint body being able to liquid-tightly engage with a male-type second tube, wherein the joint body is made of the joint material. Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al do not disclose a resin first tube. Noone et al teach a resin first tube which has been employed in the past (pg. 1, lines 10-12). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a resin first tube which has been employed in the past, as taught by Noone et al.

In regards to claim 13, Yokoyama et al disclose the first end portion of the joint body being formed as a nipple (14).

In regards to claim 16, Yokoyama et al disclose an O-ring around the hollow portion at the second end portion of the joint body in order to liquid-tightly engage with the male-type second tube.

In regards to claim 17, Noone et al disclose the second tube being a resin tube.

In regards to claim 18, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al disclose the second tube having a flange portion and the fuel pipe quick connector further comprising a retainer (19) inside the fuel joint body at the second end portion thereof for engaging with and retaining the flange portion of the second tube.

In regards to claim 19, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al disclose the retainer being made of the joint material.

In regards to claim 20, Yokoyama et al disclose a fuel pipe component obtained by joining the quick connector with a polyamide resin tube by a welding method selected from spin welding, vibration welding, laser welding and ultrasonic welding.

Note, the method of forming the device is not germane to the issue of patentability of the device itself. Therefore, the limitation, joining the quick connector with a polyamide resin tube by a welding method selected from spin welding, vibration welding, laser welding and ultrasonic welding, has been given little patentable weight.

In regards to claim 21, Noone et al disclose the polyamide resin tube being a multilayer tube comprising a barrier layer.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al and further in view of Noone et al, and further in view of Patent Application Publication US2003/0137148 A1, Andre et al.

In regards to claim 14, Yokoyama et al in view of Uchida et al and further in view of Noone et al disclose the claimed invention except an O-ring around the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body. Andre et al teach an O-ring (52) around the nipple (36) of the first end portion of the joint body (26) to seal the nipple with a flexible tube. As Andre et al relates to fluid connector, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an O-ring around the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body to seal the nipple with a flexible tube.

In regards to claim 15, Andre et al disclose the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body having a plurality of protruded barbs on an outer peripheral surface thereof.

### ***Response to Amendment***

The Affidavit under 37 CFR 1.132 filed 3/6/2006 is insufficient to overcome the rejection of claims 1-22, 26 and 27 based upon 35 U.S.C. 103(a) Yokoyama et al in view of Oka et al as set forth in the last Office action because:

1) The arguments of counsel cannot take the place of evidence in the record. In re Schulze, 346 F.2d 600, 602, 145 USPQ 716, 718 (CCPA 1965); In re Geisler, 116 F.3d 1465, 43 USPQ2d 1362 (Fed. Cir. 1997) ("An assertion of what seems to follow from common experience is just attorney argument and not the kind of factual evidence that is required to rebut a *prima facie* case of obviousness.").

2) The fact that experimentation may be complex does not necessarily make it undue, if the art typically engages in such experimentation. In re Certain Limited-Charge Cell Culture Microcarriers, 221 USPQ 1165, 1174 (Int'l Trade Comm'n 1983), *aff'd*. sub nom., Massachusetts Institute of Technology v. A.B. Fortia, 774 F.2d 1104, 227 USPQ 428 (Fed. Cir. 1985). See also In re Wands, 858 F.2d at 737, 8 USPQ2d at 1404. The test of enablement is not whether any experimentation is necessary, but whether, if experimentation is necessary, it is undue. In re Angstadt, 537 F.2d 498, 504, 190 USPQ 214, 219 (CCPA 1976).

3) "The admonition that obvious to try' is not the standard under § 103 has been directed mainly at two kinds of error. In some cases, what would have been obvious to try' would have been to vary all parameters or try each of numerous possible choices until one possibly arrived at a successful result, where the prior art gave either no indication of which parameters were critical or no direction as to which of many possible choices is likely to be successful.... In others, what was obvious to try' was to explore a new technology or general approach that seemed to be a promising field of experimentation, where the prior art gave only general guidance as to the particular form of the claimed invention or how to achieve it." In re O 'Farrell, 853 F.2d 894, 903, 7 USPQ2d 1673, 1681 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (citations omitted) (The court held the claimed method would have been obvious over the prior art relied upon because one reference contained a detailed enabling methodology, a suggestion to modify the prior art to produce the claimed invention, and evidence suggesting the modification would be successful.).

4) The quantity of experimentation needed to be performed by one skilled in the art is only one factor involved in determining whether "undue experimentation" is required to make and use the invention. "[A]n extended period of experimentation may not be undue if the skilled artisan is given sufficient direction or guidance." In *re Colianni*, 561 F.2d 220, 224, 195 USPQ 150, 153 (CCPA 1977). "The test is not merely quantitative, since a considerable amount of experimentation is permissible, if it is merely routine, or if the specification in question provides a reasonable amount of guidance with respect to the direction in which the experimentation should proceed." In *re Wands*, 858 F.2d 731, 737, 8 USPQ2d 1400, 1404 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (citing *In re Angstadt*, 537 F.2d 489, 502-04, 190 USPQ 214, 217-19 (CCPA 1976)). Time and expense are merely factors in this consideration and are not the controlling factors. *United States v. Teletronics Inc.*, 857 F.2d 778, 785, 8 USPQ2d 1217, 1223 (Fed. Cir. 1988), cert. denied, 490 U.S. 1046 (1989).

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 3/9/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re*

Art Unit: 3679

*Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, as *Oka et al* relates to polyamide compositions used in connectors, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the joint (*Yokoyama et al*) with a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methyl-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas, as taught by *Oka et al*; it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide a resin first tube which has been employed in the past, by combining *Yokoyama et al* in view of *Oka et al* with *Noone et al*; it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide an O-ring around the nipple of the first end portion of the joint body to seal the nipple with a flexible tube by combining *Yokoyama et al* in view of *Oka et al*, in view of *Noone et al*, in further view of *Andre et al*, as *Andre et al* relates to fluid connector; and as *Uchida et al* relates to polyamide compositions used in connectors, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to fabricate the joint (*Yokoyama et al*) with a joint material comprising a polyamide (nylon 9T) consisting of a dicarboxylic acid component and a diamine component, with 60 to 100 mol% of the dicarboxylic acid



Art Unit: 3679

component being terephthalic acid and 60 to 100 mol% of the diamine component being a diamine component selected from 1,9-nonanediamine and 2-methy1-1,8-octanediamine, to have good flame retardancy and heat resistance, and exhibit good thermal stability and continuous moldability when molded in melt, and it can be molded into good moldings having excellent appearances, especially fine color tone, without giving much gas, as taught by Uchida et al.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., the joint material having excellent fuel permeation resistance) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Applicant argues that the prior art does not disclose a weldable joint. The Examiner disagrees. The only non-weldable (not welded) joints are those which are extremely brittle like concrete. The prior art joint are not formed of extremely brittle materials, and therefore they are weldable.

### ***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 3679


A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Aaron M. Dunwoody whose telephone number is 571-272-7080. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30 am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3679

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Aaron M Dunwoody  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3679

.amd